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X-TREME X-MEN



HELL TO PAY



ALL BEAST CAN THINK OF AS HIS FRIENDS, HIS TEAMMATES, ARRIVE TOO LATE, IS A LINE FROM KING LEAR:

"I KNOW WHEN ONE IS DEAD, AND WHEN ONE LIVES--AND SHE IS DEAD AS EARTH."

AND LIKE OLD LEAR IN THAT AWFUL MOMENT, ALL HE WANTS TO DO IS HOWL.

BUT HE CAN'T.

HE CANNOT MOVE, HE CAN BARELY BREATHE. EACH NEW HEARTBEAT IS A MINOR MIRACLE, HIS OWN LIFE HANGS SUSPENDED BY THE THINNEST OF GOSSAMER THREADS.

AND IT CROSSES HIS MIND THAT IF THAT THREAD WERE TO SNAP, AND SEND HIM INTO THE ETERNAL DARK ALONG WITH PSYLOCKE...

...HE WOULD CONSIDER IT A BLESSING.

FREEZE!

IN THE
NAME OF
THE ACTION
FORCE OF
THE GUARDIA
CIVIL...

...YOU
MUTANTS ARE
UNDER
ARREST!

MOVE--
AND WE
FIRE!



Storm. Bishop. Rogue. Thunderbird. Sage. They are Mutants, born with powers that set them apart from Humanity. They are Outcasts, embarking on an odyssey that will forever set them apart from home and friends and family. They are Heroes tasked with the ultimate quest: to unlock the future history of our world. Their adversaries, many. Their dangers, great. Extreme challenge demands --

**EXTREME
X-MEN**

HELL TO PAY!

BY CHRIS CLAREMONT
AND SALVADOR LARROCA

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**THE LOCALS ARE
UNDERSTANDABLY UPSET.**

**THIS COMPLEX WAS THEIR
HEADQUARTERS. NOW, MOST
OF IT'S A RUIN, AND A FAIR
NUMBER OF THEIR COLLEAGUES
(UNARMED TECHNICIANS
AND ANALYSTS) BRUTALLY
SLAUGHTERED, THEY'RE LOOK-
ING FOR SOMEONE TO BLAME.**

**X-MEN
MAKE IDEAL
CANDIDATES.**

**THEIR LEADER--
STORM--
DOESN'T SAY
A WORD.**

**SHE LETS HER
ABSOLUTE MASTERY
OVER THE ELEMENTS
OF WEATHER
SPEAK FOR HER.**

OUTSIDE AND ABOVE THIS HIDDEN UNDERGROUND COMPLEX, TUCKED AWAY BENEATH LOS TORRES DE SERRANOS, THE ANCIENT GATES TO THE CITY OF VALENCIA, SPAIN...

...CITIZENS AND TOURISTS ALIKE ARE ENJOYING A LOVELY SUMMER DAY.

WHEN, SUDDENLY...

WHERE'D THOSE CLOUDS COME FROM?!

WE'D BETTER GET UNDER COVER, MAN! THIS LOOKS LIKE A PRETTY WICKED STORM!



MAKE NO MISTAKE HERE, OFFICERS. YOU HAVE FACED BUT THE SMALLEST FRACTION OF OUR CAPABILITIES. RESTRAINED BY MORALITY, BY HONOR, BY DUTY.

IF YOU WOULD SEE OTHER-WISE--!

STORM--- DON'T!

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED HERE, ANY MORE THAN THESE OFFICERS.

YOU'RE JUMPING TO THE SAME CONCLUSIONS, BLAMING THEM, THAT THEY ARE ABOUT US.

THAT WAY LIES DISASTER FOR US ALL!

I'M BISHOP! WE'RE THE X-MEN.

THAT'S SUPPOSED TO MEAN SOMETHING?

MY BRIEFING BOOK CALLS YOU TERRORISTS. AND THIS MASSACRE CERTAINLY LOOKS LIKE PROOF.

IF THAT WERE TRUE, YOU'D BE PART OF THE BODY COUNT.

DIEGO, THESE THREE-- BEAST AND ROGUE AND... PSYLOCKE--

--THEY FOUGHT TO SAVE US.

LISTEN TO THE LADY, DIEGO.

WE CAN WORK TOGETHER HERE, TO FIND THE PERP RESPONSIBLE. WE ALL HAVE A STAKE IN THIS.

ACTION FORCE-- LOWER YOUR WEAPONS.

CLEAR A PATH!

OUT OF OUR WAY!

TRAUMA TEAM COMING THROUGH!

WHAT A MESS!

THANK YOU.

I AM DIEGO SANDOVAL, COMMANDER OF ACTION FORCE.

MARIA PILAR CORTES, OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE. I'M HIS BOSS.

WE OWE YOUR FRIENDS OUR LIVES.

GET THE WOMAN CLEAR!

CHECK FOR VITALS!

DOES IT BITE?

IS IT HUMAN?

WHAT DO WE USE FOR A BASELINE?

COMMON SENSE, IDIOT!

PULSE IS THREADY!

PUPILS NON-RESPONSIVE!

BLOOD PRESSURE MINIMAL.

HE'S IN DEEP SHOCK?

MULTIPLE BLUNT FORCE INJURIES!

HE'S BEEN BEATEN TO A PULP!

WHAT ABOUT THE WOMAN?

SHE'S GONE.



YOU ATTACKED US, WITHOUT PROVOCATION OR CAUSE. YOU TOOK US PRISONER!

THE X-MEN HAVE A REPUTATION.

I HAD TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT YOU POSED A THREAT TO SPAIN.

AND FIND A WAY TO DEAL WITH YOU.

STOP FUSSIN', WILLYA. AH CAN MANAGE FINE ON MY OWN!

DON'T BE ABSURD.

WHEN WE ARRIVED, YOU COULD BARELY STAND!



AH SAID, GIVE IT A REST!

AH GOT A FAST HEALIN' ABILITY THAT'S TAKIN' CARE O' MY HURTS JUST FINE!

MADRE DE DIOS!



ROGUE?

THERE WERE THREE-- LEADER AN' BACK-UP, TWINS.

CALLED HIMSELF VARGAS, BOASTED THAT HE WAS THE ONE TIPPED OFF THE GUARDIA TO OUR BEIN' IN VALENCIA.

NEVER FOUGHT ANYONE LIKE HIM.

DIDN'T MATTER WHAT AH TRIED-- SPEED, STRENGTH, MARTIAL ARTS, BRUTE FORCE-- HE ALWAYS FOUND A WAY T'BEAT ME.

HE WAS HERE T' KILL ONE OF US.

HE'D CHOSEN ME.



BEAST TRIED T' STOP HIM.

THERE'S THE RESULT.

AH WAS AS GOOD AS DEAD.



'TIL PSYLOCKE TOOK MY PLACE.

ZZZZZZZZIP!

NO!

YOU CAN'T JUST PUT HER IN A BAG, LIKE SHE'S A PIECE OF TRASH!

LEAVE HER ALONE!

NEAL--!

HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

LET HER GO, MY FRIEND.

I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE.

CHANCES ARE, SUGAR, YOU'D HAVE ENDED THE SAME.

IS THAT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MUTANT, ROGUE?

TO BE AN X-MAN?

SHE DIDN'T DESERVE THIS.

NONE OF US DOES.

SHE MADE A FREE CHOICE.

TO BE BORN WITH THESE DAMNABLE POWERS?

TO USE THEM--FOR GOOD!

WHY D'YOU THINK STORM CHOSE US FOR THIS TEAM? WE'VE ALL BEEN HURT THIS WAY, WE'VE ALL LOST THOSE WE CHERISHED...

...AN' WE'VE COME THROUGH STRONGER FOR IT, EVEN WITH OUR SCARS.

YOU WANT TO GIVE IN TO YOUR GRIEF, YOU WANT TO CURL UP IN A BALL AND HIDE, THAT'S YOUR PRIVILEGE.

BUT THERE'S A REASON WE'RE CALLED X-MEN, AN' NOT X-BOYS.

WE ACCEPT THE POWER, WE ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITIES, WE ACCEPT THE RISK...

...AND, IF NECESSARY, THE COST.

YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO EASY, BISHOP.

THIS MOMENT'S HISTORY FOR ME, NEAL. I LOST MY KID SISTER.

YET YOU GO ON.

BEST WAY I KNOW TO HONOR HER MEMORY. AN' MAKE SURE THE LIKE NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN.

GOOD-BYE, MY HEART. MAY BRAHMAN EMBRACE YOU, MAY SHIVA BRING YOU JUSTICE.

NEAL, HOLD UP
HER HAND.

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?

THE JOB I WAS
TRAINED FOR.

THIS IS A
CRIME SCENE.
I'M A COP.

OUR FORENSICS
INVESTIGATORS...

DON'T HAVE
EQUIPMENT LIKE
OURS.

THERE ARE
SCRAPINGS
BENEATH
HER FINGER-
NAILS.

SKIN AND
SOME FLECKS
OF BLOOD.

SO SHE MANAGED
TO STRIKE HER
KILLER DURING
THEIR FIGHT.

GOOD
FOR YOU,
GIRL!

THE DNA
MATCH
FROM THESE
SAMPLES WILL
GUARANTEE HIS
CONVICTION.

BETTER YET, IT MAY
ENABLE US TO TRACK
HIM DOWN.

BUT WHY
LEAVE SUCH
EVIDENCE AT
ALL?

HE LEFT BEAST
AND PSYLOCKE IN A
POSE, AS A MESSAGE
TO THE REST OF US,
THAT THEY REPRESENT
ONLY THE START.

NOTHING ABOUT
HIM SUGGESTS
CARELESSNESS, SO
THERE HAS TO BE
A REASON.

THEY MAKE NO
SENSE TO ME. ARE
THEY BOGUS?

FALSE
CONCLUSION FROM
FALSE PREMISE,
BISHOP.

YOU PRESUME
VARGAS TO BE LIKE
US, A MUTANT.

THE DATA
DOES NOT
SUPPORT SUCH
AN ASSES-
MENT.

DOES HE
WANT US TO
FIND HIM?

SAGE,
LOOK AT THESE
READINGS!

THIS IS
SOMETHING
ALTOGETHER
NEW.

NOT MUTANT.
NOT ANY KIND
OF ESTABLISHED
SUPER-BEING.

HE IS AN
APPARENT
CONTRADICTION,
ALTOGETHER
GENETICALLY
HUMAN...

...AND
YET MUCH,
MUCH
MORE.

HE MAY CONSIDER
HIMSELF THE ULTIMATE
PREDATOR, LIKE MANY
OTHERS BEFORE HIM.

LIKE
THEM, HE WILL
NOT FIND THE
X-MEN EASY OR
COMPLIANT
PREY.

BY DAY,
BETSY
BRADDOCK
WAS A "FACE."

PICK UP A
FASHION
MAGAZINE.
SHE RULED
THE COVERS...

...JUST AS
SHE RULED
THE RUNWAYS
FROM PARIS
TO MILAN TO
NEW YORK.

BY NIGHT,
HOWEVER,
SHE LIVED
QUITE A
DIFFERENT
LIFE...

...SERVING HER
HOMELAND,
ENGLAND, AS A
SPECIAL AGENT.

EARLY IN HER
CAREER, LONG
BEFORE SHE
TOOK THE
CODE-NAME
OF PSYLOCKE
AND JOINED
THE X-MEN...

...SHE WAS ASSIGNED TO
INFILTRATE THE "MASTER
HOUSE" OF THE NOTORIOUS
HELLFIRE CLUB.

TO CATCH THE EYE
AND INTEREST OF
THE LORD IMPERIAL,
SIR GORDON PHILIPS,
AND THE RISING
BLACK KING OF THE
NEW YORK CHAPTER,
INDUSTRIALIST
SEBASTIAN SHAW.

SHE WAS
YOUNG AND
ARROGANT
AND HAD
NO FEAR.

IF BEAUTY AND CHARM
WOULD NOT SUFFICE TO
GAIN HER OBJECTIVE...

...SHE HAD HER MUTANT
PSYCHIC POWERS TO RELY ON.

SHE CONSIDERED
THIS NEW LIFE A
GREAT ADVENTURE.
SHE THOUGHT IT
WOULD BE FUN.

SHE NEVER NOTICED SHAW'S SERVANT TESSA (AS SAGE WAS KNOWN THEN). NO ONE EVER DID. THAT WAS THE IDEA.

TESSA'S MISSION WAS MUCH THE SAME, TO SERVE AS SHAW'S SHADOW...

...AND REPORT EVERYTHING SHE LEARNED TO HER OWN MENTOR. THE FOUNDER OF THE X-MEN, CHARLES XAVIER.

GO HOME, MS. BRADDOCK.

I BEG YOUR PARDON?

YOU DO NOT BELONG HERE.

BETSY'S REACTION WAS AN IMMEDIATE AND DEVASTATING PSYCHIC STRIKE.

UNFORTUNATELY, TESSA HAD BEEN TRAINED BY THE MOST POWERFUL TELEPATH ON EARTH, TO REINFORCE A WILL THAT WAS VIRTUALLY INDOMITABLE TO START WITH.

BETSY FOUND THE FULL FORCE OF HER ATTACK TURNED BACK UP-ON HER.

BEFORE SHE KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING, SHE WAS HELPLESS.

CHILD, YOU DANCE HERE WITH DEVILS. YOU FANCY YOURSELF A PLAYER...

...WHEN IN FACT YOU ARE MERELY A TOY.

COMPARED TO THEM, MY POWER IS NOTHING.

YET SEE WHAT EVEN I CAN DO?

THEY ARE EVIL, BETSY. THEY DELIGHT IN CORRUPTION-- ESPECIALLY OF SOUL AS BRILLIANT AND INNOCENT AS YOURS.

I RISK EVERYTHING TO TELL YOU THIS.

NOW SHOW ME YOU HAVE WISDOM TO MATCH YOUR COURAGE.

SNAP!

IF ONLY SHE'D HAD THE CHANCE TO DO THE SAME FOR PHOENIX.

BY EVENING, THE X-MEN HAVE A SCANNER KEYED TO VARGAS'S UNIQUE BIO-SIGNATURE.



BY MIDNIGHT, AFTER SCOURING THE CITY OF VALENCIA AND ITS ENVIRONS, THEY HAVE HIS LOCATION.



STORM ISOLATES THE TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD WITH AN IMPENETRABLE FOG.



AND LETS HER TEAMMATES DO THE REST.

FROM ROGUE, THE RAW, UNBRIDLED STRENGTH TO SHATTER STONE WALLS TO POWDER.



FROM THUNDERBIRD, BEAMS OF SOLAR PLASMA... THE FUNDAMENTAL ENERGIES OF THE SUN ITSELF...



FROM BISHOP, A MASSIVE APPLICATION OF FORCE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY...



...THE MIEN AND MANNER OF A BORN COP WHO KNOWS HOW TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE!



WE ARE THE X-MEN!

AND WE'VE COME FOR VARGAS!



THE X-MEN
COME LOOKING
FOR TROUBLE...



...SEEKING
AN OUTLET
FOR THEIR
GRIEF AND
RAGE...



THEY
GET
THEIR
WISH.



...JUST
AS THE
GUARDIA
HAD
HOURS
BEFORE
WITH THEM.



YOU
PEOPLE
DO GOOD
WORK.

THESE RAIDS HAVE BROKEN
THE BACK OF ONE OF VALENCIA'S
MOST DANGEROUS ORGANIZED
CRIME GANGS.

THE EVIDENCE YOU'VE
UNCOVERED WILL SUSTAIN
PROSECUTIONS FOR
MONTHS TO COME.

BUT NO
VARGAS.



WHO IS HE, GOMEZ? WHERE IS HE?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

AND EVEN IF I DID, I'D TELL YOU NOTHING!



WRONG ANSWER, SUGAH!

ZOOM!



ARE YOU CRAZY, WOMAN?! PUT ME DOWN!

OKAY.

NO NO NO PLEASE DON'T DROP ME!



MAKE UP YOUR MIND, SUGAH.

MY FRIEND ASKED A QUESTION.

NOW IT'S MY TURN.



HERE'S THE DEAL.

THE CLAWS GO IN, THE CLAWS GO OUT.



THREE FOR EACH HAND.

IN OR OUT, SENOR. EITHER WAY, YOU LOSE.

UNLESS...?



I'LL TALK I'LL TALK I'LL TALK

GET A GRIP, WILLYA? WE WEREN'T THAT HIGH.



ROGUE.

AH DID WHAT HAD T' BE DONE, STORM.



AH GOT NO REGRETS.

AH MAKE NO POLOGIES.

YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

AND IF HE HAD STILL REFUSED TO TALK, ROGUE...

...WHAT THEN?

WHAT THE HELL, AH'D HAVE KISSED HIM.

I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU WANTED NO MORE OUTSIDER PSYCHES INSIDE YOUR HEAD, ROGUE?

WHAT AH WANT, BISHOP, AN' WHAT AH'LL DO, ARE TWO DIFFERENT ANIMALS.

AH KISS THE MAN, AH ABSORB HIS MEMORIES, AND KNOW EV'RYTHING HE DOES.

YOU ABSORB HIS PERSONALITY, ROGUE. THE MAN BECOMES PART OF YOU.

AH CAN HANDLE IT, NEAL. AH'VE HANDLED WORSE.

T'NIGHT, THAT'S A PRICE AH'M PREPARED T' PAY.

I WISH I'D KNOWN PSYLOCKE BETTER.

IN THE CHRONICLES OF THESE DAYS THAT SURVIVED TO MY OWN ERA, SHE IS HARDLY MENTIONED.

DOES IT REALLY MATTER, BISHOP, WHETHER OR NOT PSYLOCKE--OR ANY OF US--

--MADE IT INTO YOUR DAMN HISTORY BOOKS?!

YOU DID.

WHAT MATTERS, BOYS, IS THAT SHE WAS AN X-MAN.

OUR TEAM--MAKE AN' FOR SOME MORE THAN OTHERS, A FRIEND.

ROGUE, YOU FIGHT LIKE A GIRL!

IT'S WHAT I AM, PSYLOCKE.

BUT PRETTY ACCENT AN' ALL, WITH A MOUTH LIKE THAT...

...YOU SURE AIN'T NO LADY.

BENEATH THE SUBURBAN NEW YORK MANSION THEY USED TO CALL HOME IS A CAVERNOUS CHAMBER, ACCESSIBLE TO A VERY SELECT FEW...

...THAT CAN CREATE ANY SETTING, ANY ENVIRONMENT, THE MIND CAN IMAGINE.

SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE X-MEN, TEAM MEMBERS HAVE COME HERE TO TRAIN IN THE USE OF THEIR POWERS, TO HONE THEIR SKILLS AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A TEAM. IT IS APTLY NAMED

THE
ANGER ROOM!



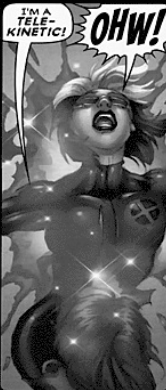
HEY,
WHAT
GIVES?!

AH! I'M WAY
FASTER, WAY
STRONGER'N
YOU--

--BUT MY
PUNCHES
AIN'T EVEN
COMIN'
CLOSE!

PAY MORE
ATTENTION,
DARLING.

I'M NOT
JUST A
SKILLED
MARTIAL
ARTIST.



I'M A
TELE-
KINETIC!

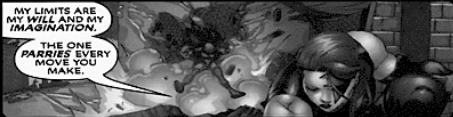
OHW!



SURELY YOU REMEMBER
ALL THOSE TEDIOUS
BRIEFINGS?

WE'RE
THE ONES WHO
USE THE POWER
OF OUR THOUGHTS
TO KINETICALLY
MANIPULATE
MATTER.

YOUR
STRENGTH
HAS PHYSICAL
LIMITS. SAME IS
TRUE FOR YOUR
INVULNERA-
BILITY.



MY LIMITS ARE
MY WILL AND MY
IMAGINATION.

THE ONE
PARRIES EVERY
MOVE YOU
MAKE.



THE
OTHER MAKES
THAT BRICK
WALL COME
ALIVE.



AND WRAP
YOU UP NICE
AND SNUG.

TO APPLY THAT POWER EFFECTIVELY,
PSYLOCKE, YOU NEED TIME TO
CONCENTRATE.

HARD TO DO
THAT WHEN YOU'RE
DODGING VOLLEY
AFTER VOLLEY OF
MY PLASMA
BLASTS!

SPLENDID
STRATEGY,
THUNDER-
BIRD.

BUT WHEN
OPPORTUNITY
PROVIDES YOU
A CLEAR
SHOT...

ZAM

ZAM

ZAM

WHAT'S SHE
DOING?!
THAT REALLY
HURT!

I HAVE
TO STOP
THIS!

SIAM!

...YOU
CAN'T
AFFORD
TO
MISS.

THE DANGER
ROOM IS A
SIMULATOR.

IN REAL
COMBAT...

...YOU
WON'T
HAVE ANY
MARGIN
FOR
ERROR!

ZARK!

SKOW!

BETSY!



DARLING,
YOU ARE
SOOO
EASY!



IN A FIGHT,
TAKE **NOTHING**
FOR GRANTED.



BECAUSE
HERE, AS
WOLVERINE
LOVES TO
SAY, THE
LOSER BUYS
THE BEER.

OUTSIDE--
NEAL--
**THUNDER-
BIRD--**
WHAT EVER
ARE YOU
LOOKING
AT?



YOU, I'M
LOOKING
AT YOU.

NOT EVEN
THE **DEVI** IS AS
BEAUTIFUL.



AIN'T THAT
SWEET!

THE
POOR
BOY'S IN
LOVE!



SOD
OFF!

NICE
TALK!

POP!

VERY NICE MOVE. YOU
MANIFESTED JUST ENOUGH
OF A PLASMA CHARGE TO
MAKE HER BACK OFF...



...BUT NOT
ENOUGH TO
HURT. YOU'RE
IMPROVING.

WORKING
WITH YOU
MAKES IT
EASY.

THEN LET'S
START AGAIN,
SHALL WE?

I NEVER KNEW ANYONE WITH SUCH... *PASSION.* I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S GONE.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

**WE'LL BALANCE
THE SCALES, NEAL.**

NOT
TONIGHT.
NOR
ANYTIME
SOON.

**VARGAS
WAS NEVER
HERE. WE HAVE BEEN
FOLLOWING A FALSE
TRAIL, DESIGNED TO
FOOL EVEN OUR
TRACKING
SYSTEMS.**

**HE
SUCKERED
US. BUT
WHY?**

**SAME
AS BEFORE,
WITH BEAST
AND
PSYLOCKE,
TO MAKE A
POINT.**

THIS IS HIS GAME, HIS RULES. CHANCES ARE, IF AND WHEN WE EVER FIND HIM, IT'LL BE BECAUSE HE WANTS US TO.

THAT IS
UNACCEPTABLE!

AND WHEN
WE DO FIND HIM,
IT WILL BE FOR
ONE REASON
ONLY--

-- BECAUSE VARGAS HAS DECIDED THAT IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER OF US TO DIE!



<THANK YOU FOR COMING, FATHER.>

<DOCTOR, ARE YOU SURE--?>

<WE'VE DONE EVERYTHING HUMANLY POSSIBLE FOR THE CREATURE. BUT HIS INJURIES ARE TOO SEVERE.>

<IT'S A MIRACLE HE'S LASTED THIS LONG.>



MY SON, I DO NOT KNOW IF YOU CAN HEAR ME.

I DON'T KNOW IF WE SHARE THE SAME FAITH.

BUT DESPITE YOUR APPEARANCE AND THE NAME THEY CALL YOU, I WILL ASSUME YOU ARE A MAN AND NOT A BEAST...

...AND THAT YOU HAVE A SOUL--!



HE HAS A SOUL, PADRE. BRIGHT AND SHINING AS THE STARS.

BUT IT'S MY SERVICES HE REQUIRES NOW, NOT YOURS.



THANK YOU.

HOW QUICKLY THIS MOMENT'S COME.

THE POWER THAT LED CHARLES XAVIER TO FIND ME...

...THAT MADE ME SO VALUABLE TO SOME OF HIS GREATEST ENEMIES...



...NOW MAY BE THE BEAST'S ONLY HOPE.



FINALLY, I GET TO PLAY THE HERO.

WE'RE THE SAME AGE, HENRY MCCOY, YOU AND I.

XAVIER FOUND ME WHEN HE FOUND YOU.

YOUR MUTANT POWER WAS A FULL COMPLEMENT OF PHYSICAL GIFTS--STRENGTH, SPEED, ABILITY. PLUS THE POTENTIAL TO EVOLVE INTO SOMETHING FAR GREATER.

MINE IS THE ABILITY TO PERCEIVE THAT PROMISE...

...AND BRING IT INTO BEING.

THIS IS NOT THE END FOR YOU, BUT A STAGE IN A PROCESS. THE FORM YOU NOW POSSESS IS LIKE A CHRYSLIS, AWAITING MERELY THE PROPER TRIGGER TO INITIATE THAT METAMORPHOSIS.

I CAN TAKE THE ENERGIES OF THAT CHANGE AND USE THEM TO AUGMENT YOUR BODY'S ALREADY CONSIDERABLE CAPACITY TO HEAL ITSELF.

THAT GHOSTLY IMAGE-- COULD THAT BE THE SHAPE OF WHAT'S TO COME?

DOESN'T MATTER. THIS IS DELICATE WORK. IF I LOSE FOCUS, I'LL LOSE HIS LIFE.

YOU ARE THE GREATEST TELEPATH ON EARTH, XAVIER.

WE WERE CHILDREN. WE HAD NO SECRETS FROM YOU.

WHAT DID YOU SEE IN HENRY THAT MADE YOU RECRUIT HIM FOR THE X-MEN?

WHAT SHADOW DID YOU SEE IN MY SOUL...

...THAT MADE YOU SEND ME DOWN ANOTHER ROAD?

WHY WAS HE WORTHY TO BE THE HERO?

AND I CHOSEN BY YOU TO BE A SPY?

TESSA!

TESSA IS NO MORE.

I AM SAGE!



ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I WAS TRYING TO HELP!

WHAT-
EVER IT WAS,
STORM...



...IT DID THE TRICK.



WHAT A GLORIOUS MORNING.



I JUST WISH BETSY--!

YES. I KNOW.

STORM,
A MOMENT PLEASE?

IT CANNOT WAIT.

I'VE REVIEWED MY ENTIRE DATABASE. THERE IS NO MENTION OF AN ENTITY LIKE VARGAS, NOR EVEN A HINT OF HIS EXISTENCE. HE IS COMPLETELY UNKNOWN.



SOMEONE NEW THEN.

MORE THAN THAT. HE IS A MATCH FOR OUR POWERS. WE SEEM UNABLE TO DETECT HIM. HE HAS APPARENTLY TARGETED US X-MEN SPECIFICALLY. HIS PURPOSE IS TO HUNT US TO OUR DEATH.



WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

FOR EVERY MUTANT CHARLES XAVIER HAS DISCOVERED, HE HAS DEVISED A MEANS FOR THEIR DESTRUCTION. THE ULTIMATE "FAIL-SAFE" MEANS TO DEFEND HUMANITY FROM OUT-OF-CONTROL MUTANTS.



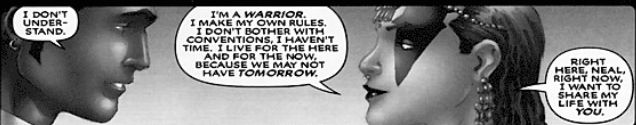
THE XAVIER PROTOCOLS. WHAT OF THEM?

SUPPOSE VARGAS IS THOSE PROTOCOLS MADE FLESH?

SUPPOSE WE ARE RIGHT TO BE PARANOID?



SUPPOSE-- TO KEEP US FROM FINDING DESTINY'S DIARIES-- OUR TEACHER, OUR MENTOR, HAS SENT HIM AFTER US?



CALLS ARE MADE.
ARRANGEMENTS
FINALIZED.
PERMISSIONS
GRANTED.

BY EVENING, A
PRIVATE JET MAKES
THE JOURNEY FROM
GREAT BRITAIN TO
VALENCIA.



ABOARD ARE
PSYLOCKE'S TWIN
BROTHER, BRIAN
BRADDOCK, AND
HIS WIFE,
MEGGAN.

HE STILL
CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT'S TRUE.



THE STRICKEN FACES
AT THE FOOT OF THE
BOARDING LADDER
FINALLY CONVINCE
HIM OTHERWISE.



ORORO, DON'T
DO THIS.
WE ARE BEING
HUNTED,
HENRY, AND
YOU NEED TIME
TO HEAL.

YOU CANNOT STAY.
IT IS NOT SAFE.
END OF
DISCUSSION.

TOUGH
GAL.

ABSOLUTELY.



BEFORE I
JOINED THE
X-MEN, WHEN
BETSY WAS A
SUPER-MODEL,
I HAD SUCH
A CRUSH
ON HER.



MY REGRET IS THAT
OUR PATHS AS X-MEN
KEPT YOU AND ME
APART, MORE THAN
TOGETHER. I SHALL
MISS YOU.



THEN
COME WITH
ME.

AND
LEAD
VARGAS TO
EVEN MORE
TARGETS?
WE DO NOT
DARE.



SOMETHING'S
MISSING. WHAT
ARE YOU NOT
TELLING ME?

NOTHING... OF
CONSEQUENCE.

WHEN
THAT TIME
COMES,
DR.
MCCOY...

...THERE WILL BE MORE
THAN ENOUGH OF ME
FOR YOU ALL.



PROMISE
ME, STORM,
WHEN YOU
FIND VARGAS,
I WANT MY
PIECE OF
HIM.





"PSYLOCKE
WAS THE FIRST."



"SHE
WILL
NOT BE
THE
LAST!"



NEXT:
**DREAMTIME
SERENADE!**